1: Bowen C-4 (1945-1947) 1951 MK2 Maritime Arabs 1952

estimate of the number of boats operating in 1946 would be as follows:

Bahrein	150
Kuwait	100
Darin, Qatif, Jubail	30
Trucial coast, Qatar, and Persian ports	250
	530

Manning these 500-odd craft were probably not over 10,000 men.

In Oman a strange balance of labor has been set up by the coincidence of the pearling season with the date harvest. Starting about June there is a migration of men northward from the Batinah Coast to the Trucial Coast; these men work the pearl fisheries. Some go north in caravans, others sail up in their *bedens* and other dhows. Opposed to the flood of men who make this temporary migration is a counter-migration of women who move southward from the Trucial Coast to the Batinah Coast; these women are hastening to the date groves for the date harvest. Often the women journey southward on the caravans which are returning from carrying the men to the Trucial Coast. Several months later, in September, the journeyers start the return home.

Bertram Thomas states that a considerable percentage of the army of men annually migrating northward to the Trucial Coast is composed of slaves.[17] These Batinah contingents are usually accompanied by a tribal agent who enlists them with some pearling *nakhoda*. The slaves are the best divers, as they have been at it from youth; freemen usually work the ropes in Oman. Slave divers are noted for their lack of fear of diving into deep water or into muddy water containing weeds. So great is the need for labor in the Trucial pearleries that boats sail into the Gulf from as far away as Socotra to join the pearl fishing.[18]

Pearl fishing is a seasonal occupation, as the divers must wait for warm summer water before starting to dive. Probably few people realize there is a winter in the Persian Gulf, and that the water gets so cold that swimming for periods of over five minutes is extremely chilling. In Hasa Province it is not uncommon

[17] Bertram Thomas, *Alarms and Excursions in Arabia* (London, 1931), p. 238.

[18] Ibid., p. 143

2: Villiers T-5 (1938-39) 1948 MK2 Maritime Arabs MK2
Kuwait MI1

K MA 438 439 505

his vessel pays practically no port dues. His dates can therefore be warehoused in the dhow, until the market can easily absorb them.

MA 439 443

The dhow trade is "native" trade, a stubborn plant which has been growing a long, long time. Nearly all the cargoes carried in dhows are for the native bazaars, and almost never for European account. Much of the cargoes consists of goods which the dhow captain himself, or some merchant or merchants travelling with him, sells for his own profit. The dhow is a peddler, as well as a carrier; a storehouse, as well as a ship; a means of livelihood to travelling merchants, as well as to her crew proper. Basra dates, though the most important outward cargo,[1] are only one source of revenue: there are a host of others, not necessarily always legitimate.

K MA' [245] 456 471 784 466

Kuwaiti owners of date plantations on the nearby Basra river play a considerable part in the financing of deep-sea dhows, though in most cases the captains, called *nakhodas*, are at least the nominal owners. It suits the merchants well that the *nakhodas* should regard themselves as the owners, for this provides them with a cheap form of insurance. If the dhow be lost it is the *nakhoda's* loss, and not the merchant's, for the poor captain must pay back not only the value of the dhow but the advance of freight given him to finance his voyage. Since Islam forbids all forms of ordinary insurance, this arrangement is to the merchant's liking. The *nakhodas* must accept it, for in most cases there is no other way by which they can acquire a big dhow.

In Kuwait, immediately prior to the outbreak of World War II, there was beginning to be some restiveness about this, and an association of the *nakhodas* had the temerity to issue its demands upon the merchants. These included payment of demurrage when unduly delayed at the loading berths in Basra (a dhow might be kept for weeks waiting for her cargo), a sliding scale of freights for different ports instead of the customary flat rate of 1.5 or 2 rupees a package regardless of destination, liability for the return of advances to cease with the loss of the ship, two competent officers for every seagoing dhow, and so forth. The demands represente

[1] Crew requirements and the very measurements of the dhows themselves are reckoned in terms of dates. A sailor to each 100 packages is the general rule, in Kuwait, and a dhow is spoken of there as having a capacity for 2,000 packages of dates, rather than as being of 100 tons burden.

MA 804 505